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ABSTRACT

An overview of libraries in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.) is presented, beginning with an analysis of the role played by Lenin in shaping the development of the library system in that country. There follows a historical survey of libraries in the Soviet Union, with an emphasis on the period from 1955 to 1975. Certain aspects of librarianship unique to the U.S.S.R., including the All-Union Book Chamber, the distribution centers, and efforts at centralized classification are reviewed. The last section examines the state libraries of the U.S.S.R. Appendixes include: the number of libraries in each of the republics, and the volume counts in 1913 and 1970; a list of U.S.S.R. national libraries; a list of questions asked by Lenin about library operations; and a bibliography. (Author/LS)

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Keywords: Libraries - U.S.S.R.; All-Union Book Chamber; State Libraries - U.S.S.R.

30 pages, tables, bibliography

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INTRODUCTION

This survey of libraries in the U.S.S.R. begins with an analysis of the role played by one of the leading ideologues of the Russian Revolution - Vladimir Ilyich Lenin - in shaping the development of the library system in that country. There follows a historical survey of libraries in the Soviet Union, with an emphasis on the period from 1955 to 1975 (end of the current five-year plan). Certain aspects of librarianship which are unique to the U.S.S.R., including the All-Union Book Chamber, the distributing centers, and efforts at centralized classification, constitute the next section of the study. The last section examines the state libraries of the U.S.S.R., specially those of Byelorussia, Uzbekistan, the Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and the Central Asian Republics.

A word about availability of information may be in order. We found that the Unesco Bulletin for Libraries has the most consistent coverage of library developments in the U.S.S.R. of any periodical surveyed. The reports prepared by American and British librarians following visits to the country were also helpful, cf. Horecky, Ruggles and Swank and Whatley in the bibliography. In general, the availability of information on the Soviet Union varies directly with the state of relations between the East and the West.

LENIN AND LIBRARIES

Lenin spent a lot of time in libraries... [1]

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1. Simsova, S., ed. Lenin, Krupskaia and Libraries, p. 58.

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So wrote Nadezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaia, wife of the Russian leader. Not only did Lenin spend a lot of time in libraries, a fact which Russian writers have taken great pains to establish as they trace the route of his travels [2] in and out of Russia, but he also thought and wrote a lot about libraries. In fact, it is probably safe to assert that no other world leader concerned himself as directly with the administration and development of libraries as did Lenin. But then, he was married to a librarian.

One of the basic principles which underline the role of institutions in the Soviet Union is that their philosophy and operations must be oriented towards the advance of Communism, and by extension, that of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). As early as 1905 Lenin had enunciated this principle when he wrote:

> Publishing houses and warehouses, shops and reading rooms, libraries -- the whole trade in books ought to become a party affair and accountable to the party. 3

Lenin had studied and admired the organization of libraries in several European countries and the U.S., and there is evidence that he analyzed the report of the New York Public Library for the year 1913 in

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2. As in this statement from an article entitled "Lenin and Libraries" by G. P. Fonotov in the May-June 1970 issue of Unesco Bulletin for Libraries, page 154:

> Lenin made use of many libraries in Russia, apart from the libraries in the towns on the Volga where he lived and in St. Petersburg, there were the libraries in Moscow, Krasnojarsk, Minusinsk and Eskov; in Western Eurpe he used the libraries in Berlin, Munich, London, Paris, Geneva, Zurich, Berne, Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Cracow.

3. Simsova, op. cit., p. 12.

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some detail. In that same year he wrote:

> In Western countries a number of unhealthy prejudices are widespread from which Holy Mother Russia is free ... There they have dedicated themselves to the strange, incomprehensible, barbaric aim of making these great, these immense libraries accessible not only to scholars, professors and other specialists like them, but to the masses, the crowds, the man in the street. 4

As early as November, 1917 Lenin was beginning to implement some of the practices of western public libraries which he admired. In that month he ordered that the library reading room in St. Petersburg be kept open daily, including Sundays and holidays, from eight in the morning until eleven o'clock in the evening.

Between 1918 and 1920 Lenin, working through the SNK (Council of People's Commissars), issued a series of edicts that would affect the course of Russian libraries in years to come. To wit:

- On the centralization of libraries:

> The SNK brings to the attention of the People's Commissariat for Education its lack of concern for the proper organisation of libraries in Russia, and commissions the commissariat immediately to take the most drastic measures firstly to centralize library administration in Russia; and secondly, to introduce the Swiss and American System. 5

- On library control:

> All libraries and organisations which are listed as having libraries of any kind, or which have libraries at their disposal, must not later than 15th August (1918)

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4. Simsova, op. cit., p. 15.

5. Simsova, op. cit., p. 37.

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> this year report this fact to the library department of the people's commissariat for education. 6

- On library networks:

> We must make use of the books which we have, and undertake the job of organising a network of libraries which will help the people use every book at our disposal. 7

- On open access:

> All libraries, both those under the control of the People's Commissariat for Education and libraries of all other departments, institutions and voluntary organisations are declared open to all. 8

Lenin's concern extended to the day-to-day operations of libraries. Appendix C shows a list of questions which Lenin prepared as a suggested means of evaluating library performance. It is reflective of the obsession with reporting and control which characterizes Russian library operations today.

Russian librarians use Lenin's writings in much the same manner as Chinese Communists use Mao's Little Red Book:

> ... librarians of all ages 'consult' Lenin as they would a colleague living today ... every librarian sees in Lenin, the man, the scholar and the politician, an exemplary and undying example of the deep love of books and libraries. 9

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6. Simsova, op. cit., p. 38.

7. Simsova, op. cit., p. 24.

8. Simsova, op. cit., p. 40.

9. Fonotov, op. cit., p. 160.

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HISTORICAL SURVEY OF LIBRARIES IN THE U.S.S.R.

The first mention of a library in Old Russia (Kievan Rus) dates from the year 1037. It was the library established by Prince Yaroslav the Wise, and it was housed in the Cathedral of St. Sophia.

The art of printing was introduced into the country in the year 1564, and Ivan Fedorov played an important role in the advancement of printing.

With the exception of the founding of the Library of the Academy of Sciences in 1725 and that of the Moscow University Library in 1756, library expansion in the eighteenth century was slow.

> During the nineteenth century, public libraries were founded in most of the large towns in Russia and university libraries were opened in St. Petersburg, Kazan, Kharkov, Vilno (Vilnius), Dorpat (Tartu), Odessa and Tomsk. The National Library - the St. Petersburg Public Library - was opened in 1814, and in 1862 the Rumyantsev Library (today the Lenin State Library of the U.S.S.R.) opened in Moscow. 10

Among the names associated with library development in the eighteenth, nineteenth and early twenty centuries we find: Prokopovich, Lomonosov, Lobachevsky, Krylov, Herzen, Chernyshevsky, Dobrolyubov, Stasov, Smirdin, Sobolshchikov, Pavlenkov, and Rubakin.

A combination of political and religious limitations kept many titles and authors out of the libraries. This fact, coupled with developing agitation led to the creation of illegal libraries. However, swift

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10. Fonotov, G. "The Libraries of the U.S.S.R. During the Last Fifty Years." Unesco Bulletin for Libraries, September-October, 1967, p. 241.

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repression by the Cheka, the feared Tsarist secret police, led to their early demise.

The revolution of 1917 brought about a radical change in the governmental attitude towards libraries (see above), and the tempo of publishing was greatly accelerated. For the first time in history books became accessible to soldiers, workers and peasants.

In 1934, a law was passed to regulate the organization and management of libraries in the U.S.S.R. This law aided the development of the library network, and by 1940 the country had approximately one-quarter of a million libraries, with over 450 million books in stock.

Despite heroic efforts by librarians and the population at large to save the collections from the disasters of war, it has been estimated that "... In the largest libraries alone, over 100,000,000 books were destroyed ..." [11] in the course of the German invasion of Russia.

Reconstruction began as early as 1943, with the creation of a State literature fund (Gosfond), and by 1950 the library system had been restored to its pre-war level.

An article which appeared in the May-June, 1954 issue of the Unesco Bulletin for Libraries, and which was largely based on the 1950 edition of the Soviet Encyclopedia, indicated that libraries in the Soviet Union could be classified into six major groups: 1) State public libraries; 2) libraries of the Academy of Sciences; 3) autonomous special libraries; 4) university libraries; 5) mass libraries (school

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11. Fonotov, "The Libraries in the U.S.S.R. During the Last Fifty Years," p. 243.

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and children's libraries, rural libraries, soldiers' libraries, motorized libraries, etc.), and 6) trade union libraries.

In the material that follows we will attempt to present a thumbnail sketch of each of the ten most important national libraries of the U.S.S.R. Readers who desire more in-depth coverage are directed to the works of Simon Francis and George Chandler, published within the last two or three years, which provide excellent analyses of individual libraries and groups of libraries.

Founded in 1862 as the personal library of Count Rumiantsev, the Lenin State Library is the principal library in Moscow and the center of bibliographical research for the U.S.S.R. The library contains the Archangel Gospel, which dates back to the year 1092, and is considered to be one of the two oldest surviving documents in Russian history. According to Chandler,[12] the stock of the Lenin Library exceeds 25 million volumes. The Library also has responsibility for the methodological guidance of all libraries in the U.S.S.R., including the national libraries of the union republics.

The M.E. Saltykov-Shchedrin State Public Library of Leningrad, founded in 1814, is one of the proudest libraries of the Soviet Union. Not only was it the first public and first national library of Russia, and the recipient of the Order of the Red Banner of Labor, but " ... in spite of the fact that it found itself in the conditions of siege of the city and subject to severe bombings and artillery fire, the Library

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12. Chandler, George. Libraries, Documentation and Bibliography in the USSR: 1917-71. New York: Seminar Press, 1972, p. 38.

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did no interrupt work for a single day (during W. W. II)." [13] The book stock of the Library is estimated at over 17 million. In addition, the Saltykov-Shchedrin Library is the repository of the first dated document of the Russian language, the Ostromirov Gospel, which has been placed either in 1056 or 1057.

The Library of the All Union Academy of Sciences in Leningrad provides library and bibliographic assistance to the academies of sciences of the union republics. The stock of the Library totalled 12.5 million volumes in 1970. The Library's "... particular strength is in the natural sciences and technology. But it also included valuable collections of ancient Russian manuscripts, incunabula and the personal library of Peter the Great." [14]

The Institute of Scientific Information and the Fundamental Library of the Social Sciences of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences (INIBON) has as its aim to act as the center of scientific information in the social sciences in the U.S.S.R. The Institute was the first major special library established following the October Revolution. Present stock has been placed at 8.7 million volumes including the holdings of the branches.

The State Public Scientific and Technical Library was established in 1958 as a result of action taken by the All Union Council of Ministers.

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13. Morachevskii, Nikolai Iakovlevich. Guide to the M.E. Saltykov-Shchedrin State Public Library - Leningrad. Los Angeles: UCLA Library Occassional Papers, Number 14, 1963, p. 5.

14. Chandler, op. cit., p. 64.

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The main field of interest of this Library is engineering. The Library acts as a methodological advisory center for the technical and scientific libraries in the country. It also serves as a specialized scientific and research institution. The SPSTL is also responsible for the co-ordination of bibliographic efforts by Soviet libraries in the area of technology. Holdings were estimated at over 6 million volumes in 1970. Photocopies made available to industrial and scientific researchers exceeded twelve million.

The All Union Library of Foreign Literature was founded in Moscow in 1921. The Library was created in an effort to obtain information from abroad in a systematic way. It is a central depository for foreign literature and Russian translations in the natural sciences, social and political sciences, philology, literature, fiction and the arts. Total stock has been estimated at four million volumes. The department of mass media arranges talks by foreign authors in their native language, followed by discussions also in the language of the author. The Department of Research and Bibliography is entrusted with the task of preparing annotated cards for foreign books and periodicals.

The State Public Historical Library of Moscow was founded in 1938 to act as the "... central historical library of the Russian Federation."[15] The total stock of the Library amounted to some 3 million items, with a strong concentration in modern Soviet history. Needless to say, the history of Communism and that of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union occupy prominent places in the collection.

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15. Chandler, op. cit., p. 58.

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The All Union Institute of Scientific and Technical Information (VINITI) was founded in 1952 as the Institute of Scientific Information. In 1955, it absorbed the Institute of Technical Information and assumed its present name. The main purpose of the Institute is to provide an abstracting and photo-reproducing service for materials (including patents and catalogues) produced in foreign countries. In the year 1970 the Institute prepared over one million abstracts of publications originating in over 100 countries.

The Central Scientific Agricultural Library was founded in 1930 to act as the "... central agricultural library of the Soviet Union, as the centre for the scientific and methodological guidance of the libraries in the agricultural libraries' network, and as the centre for the coordination of reference and bibliographical work in agricultural libraries." [16] Its stock as of 1970 exceeded 3.2 million volumes.

The State Central Scientific Medical Library was founded in 1919, and had a book stock of 1.5 million volumes by 1970. Its principal function is to act as the All Union depository for medical literature and theses and to serve as a methodological and bibliographic center for medical libraries in the U.S.S.R.

Although it is listed in the Encyclopedia Britannica [17] as having over three million volumes, we were unable to find any information about the Library of the Central House of the Soviet Army in Moscow.

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16. Chandler, op. cit., p. 85.

17. Encyclopedia Britannica, volume 13, p. 1055.

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Writing about Soviet libraries in 1959 Paul Horecky stated:

> It would be an oversimplification to think that the country's libraries are all run from one switchboard with pushbutton-like precision. There is a multiplicity of library systems, each under different jurisdictions, yet their activities and organizational forms are subject to strict governmental regulation. 18

The last segment of this section attempts to bring the historical analysis of developments in Soviet librarianship up to the present, and to explore projected outcomes of the ninth five-year plan (1971-75).

In an article which appeared in the Bowker Annual of Library and Book Trade Information - 1972,[19] L. I. Vladimirov, Dean of the Chair for Librarianship and Information Science at Vilnius State University in the Lithuanian SSR, attempted to summarize developments in the field for the preceding year. Among the facts given we find that in 1971 Soviet libraries had stocks of 1 billion, 258 million units. This figure provides a total of 521 books per capita for 1970, an increase of 68 books from the 1966 figures. Most of the growth has taken place in rural regions, where both permanent and mobile libraries attempt to reach the most recondite portions of the nation.

The Professor evidences some disquiet when he writes:

> The achievements of library development in the Soviet Union are obvious and impressive, but still do not come up to our expectations. 20

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18. Horecky, Paul L. Libraries and Bibliographic Centers in the Soviet Union. Washington, D.C. : Council on Library Resources, Inc., 1959, p. 2.

19. Vladimirov, pp. 460-463.

20. Ibid.

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V. V. Serov, Head of the Chief Inspectorate of Libraries of the Ministry of Culture of the U.S.S.R., the highest ranking official concerned with library matters in the Soviet Union, has written an article in the Unesco Bu. etin for Libraries [21] in which he analyzed the accomplishments of the eighth five-year plan (1966-70) and described the objectives for the ninth five-year plan (1971-75).

According to Serov, the "... main achievement of the eighth five-year plan was the improvement of book promotion." [22] This term includes increases in the number of readers as well as increases in publications. In addition, the period was marked by a structural reorganization which led to a reduction in the total number of libraries through the absorption of smaller libraries by larger units.

As of December, 1973, there were a total of 360,000 libraries in the Soviet Union, of which 128,000 were public libraries (see Appendix A for 1970 breakdown by republic); 58,000 were scientific and technical libraries, and 170,000 were school libraries.

One of the stated goals of the 1971-75 plan is to have each public library become a major cultural and scientific information center, capable of meeting both general and specialized requirements. A second objective is the creation of a single unified library and bibliographical system for the entire country.

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21. Serov, V. V. "Soviet Libraries in the Current Five-Year Plan." Unesco Bulletin for Libraries, November-December, 1973, pp. 335-342+.

22. Serov, op. cit., p. 336.

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It is expected that the greatest growth in the number of readers will occur in the republics of central Asia, the Transcaucasus Kazakhstan, Estonia, Latvia, Siberia and the Far East.

The ninth five-year plan also proposes the creation of several computer programs which will lead to the establishment of a machine-based information retrieval system, specially for the preparation of computer-generated catalogues of the acquisitions for the Lenin State Library of the U.S.S.R.

Another goal of the plan is stated as follows:

> Centralization is one of the main ways in which library work can be improved, and for this reason the application of the centralization principle must become the common concern of all the authorities concerned. 23

The three principal problems foreseen in accomplishing the goals of the five-year plan are: 1) the need to acquire a variety of print and non-print materials in many fields; 2) the need to fill gaps in the collections of certain republic libraries, and 3) the need to improve the deposit storage of public book stocks.

In order to solve the anticipated problems and achieve the stated goals, the plan calls for an improvement in the training of librarians and in the methodology and content of library research. So far, three broad research areas have been identified and/or explored. For 1969-71, the theme was "Books and reading in the life of small towns." In the period 1972-74, the theme is "Books and Reading in the life of the

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23. Serov, op. cit., p. 340.

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countryside today." For 1974-76, the theme will be "Books and reading in the life of the working class."

A great deal has been written on the question of Soviet proclivities to modify statistics in order to assure the success of the many facets of the five-year plans. However, it must be recognized that there is value in having all sectors of the library profession working towards a common set of goals.

UNIQUE ASPECTS OF LIBRARIANSHIP IN THE U.S.S.R.

The Book Chamber of the U.S.S.R. was founded in Petrograd in 1917. Its "... complex system of catalogues is the basis of State bibliography registration, centralized cataloguing, information and bibliographical services, and for ensuring that printers deliver the compulsory deposit copy." [24] The Chamber is responsible for inventorying everything issued in the country, including books, musical scores, maps, drawings and charts. The records include everything published under the Soviet government, regardless of the language of the original.

Details of works published, including bibliographical descriptions, are recorded separately by type of publication in periodical chronicles called letopisi in Russian. The chronicles include one on books, which appears every week and is cumulated annually. They also include separate issues on art, music, and cartography. A special chronicle details the publication of the 12,000 Soviet periodicals. In addition, a

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24. Kuznecova, N. V. "The All-Union Book Chamber - National Bibliographical Centre of the Soviet Union." Unesco Bulletin for Libraries, May-June, 1969, p. 168.

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Bibliography of Soviet Bibliographies is published annually to meet the requirements of bibliographers.

According to Soviet propaganda, the Soviet State attaches such importance to the role of libraries in raising the cultural levels of the nation that it has assumed the task of supplying them with the books and other materials which go into collection building. The mechanism which is used for this purpose is the distributing center, also known as the library supply agency.

The distributing centers for libraries began to operate shortly after the October Revolution, along lines dictated by Lenin himself, and their efforts were systematized through a 1920 decree of the Council of People's Commissars.

It is possible to identify four distinct types of centers:

1. A distributing center for research libraries, located in Moscow and serving approximately 1300 libraries throughout the Soviet Union.

2. A network of regional or territorial centers which supply most of the country's libraries, including all the public libraries.

3. Two centers, one in Moscow and one in Leningrad, which serve all technical libraries.

4. A Moscow-based distributing center which serves the needs of school libraries.

A typical distributing center consists of two sections. One section is concerned with the questions of providing advice to libraries

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on their collections. The other section is responsible for the physical acquisition and distribution of materials. Orders are either on an open basis, renegotiated annually, or for specific materials. Some centers also act as ordinary bookshops, in order to enable libraries to fill gaps or to acquire additional copies of popular materials.

> The work of the distributing centers for libraries is not free of imperfections, and has been repeatedly criticized in the Soviet press. Notwithstanding, the sum total of their activity over more than four decades prove conclusively that they are a most convenient and efficient supply source for the large and ever growing network of Soviet libraries. 25

Efforts at centralized cataloguing and classification began in the early nineteen twenties in the U.S.S.R. However, "... it was only in 1960 that Soviet publishing houses began to introduce centralized cataloguing and classification." [26] By 1967, the practice of cataloguing at publication was extended to most materials produced in the country, with the exception of certain art and children books.

According to E. R. Sukiasjan, Chief Librarian at the Lenin Library in Moscow:

> At the present time, centralized classification work, in the U.S.S.R. as in other countries, suffers from a number of drawbacks which impair its efficiency. 27

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25. Vasilenko, V. I. "Distributing Centres for Libraries in the U.S.S.R." Unesco Bulletin for Libraries, May-June, 1966, p. 129.

26. Sukiasjan, E. R. "Centralized Classification: Achievements and Problems in Regard to Future Development." Unesco Bulletin for Libraries, July-August, 1968, p. 191.

27. Sukiasjan, op. cit., p. 193.

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Among the factors listed as sources of difficulties we find: 1) the structure of the classification system - a modified version of UDC; 2) the possibility of error in notation, multiplied through printing; 3) the lack of stability in the classification tables when contractions or expansions become necessary, and 4) limitations in the system for alterations and additions.

Libraries in the U.S.S.R. have attempted to tackle the problem of uniformity in scientific and technical writings via the creation of an elaborate set of standards published in 1967 and 1968, entitled System of Informational and Bibliographical Documentation. The standards developed can be divided into two groups.

The first group includes rules for describing printed material for catalogues, card indexes, and informational and bibliographical output. It consists of three sets of standards.

The U.S.S.R. State standard Description of Books for Catalogues, "... covers the catalogue description of books published in Russian, in the languages of other nationalities of the U.S.S.R. and in foreign European languages." [28] This standard also covers other print and non-print material.

The U.S.S.R. State standard Rules Governing the Description of Periodicals for Catalogues provides guidance for the cataloguing of journals, continuing publications and newspapers. This standard, like

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28. Haritonov, R. P. "Standardization of the Principal Processes in Scientific and Technical Information and Librarianship in the U.S.S.R." Unesco Bulletin for Libraries, September-October, 1971, p. 260.

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the one mentioned above, defines the form and content of catalogue entries.

The U.S.S.R. State standard Rules Governing the Description of Printed Material for Bibliographical and Informational Publications gives rules for bibliographical entries and footnotes.

The second group, which consists of four set of standards, prescribes the layout of printed material.

The U.S.S.R. State standard Imprint for Publications "... lays down the relevant items of information to be shown in publications, together with basic rules for how they should be set out in different types of printed material." [29]

The U.S.S.R. State standard Layout of Articles in Journals gives the rules for the layout of titles, sub-titles, abstracts, author summaries, etc.

The U.S.S.R. State standard Bibliographical Strips "... contains a defnition of bibliographical strips, and indicates what items they comprise and in what order these should be arranged." [30]

The U.S.S.R. State standard Information on Normative Technical Documentation gives principles for the acquisition, registration and processing of standards and specifications, as well as for the construction of cataloguing and reproducing systems for technical documents.

The principal libraries of the Soviet Union took part in the elaboration of the standards.

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29. Haritonov, op. cit., p. 261.

30. Ibid.

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The unique aspects of librarianship which we have reviewed in this section included the Book Chamber of the U.S.S.R., the distributing centers for libraries, centralization of cataloguing and classification and standards for scientific and technical writings. While it is difficult to find exact parallels for these institutions and processes in the United States, it could be argued that the Library of Congress, together with the Copyright Office, resemble the Book Chamber of the U.S.S.R. Book wholesalers and jobbers, together with the American Library Association, can be said to parallel the efforts of the distributing centers for libraries. However, freedom of selection and competition, two of the elements which characterize the American process, do not appear to be present within the Soviet structure. When we examine centralization of cataloguing and classification, we must cite the Library of Congress and the Anglo-American Rules as parallel elements. Finally, while no exact parallel to the strict standards set by the Russians for scientific publications exist in this country, a number of individuals and associations have been moving towards the standardization of materials in certain fields.

STATE LIBRARIES OF THE SOVIET REPUBLICS

When the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was established in 1922, the agreement of incorporation was signed by delegates from the Russian Federation, the Ukrainian S.S.R., the Byelorussian S.S.R. and the Transcaucasian Federation. The fact that at the present time the U.S.S.R. is comprised of 15 Union and 20 Autonomous Republics, together

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with 8 Autonomous Regions and 10 National Districts, bears witness to the tremendous process of expansion and agglutination which the country has undergone within the last half century.

The process of expansion has been aided in the cultural sphere by a policy which assures that important political documents originate either in Moscow or in Leningrad, the strongholds of the Russian Federation, but which allows the development of national literatures through republican printing houses and the preservation of the national cultural heritage through the state libraries.

This section of our study presents a brief analysis of the role which state libraries play within the Soviet library system, and examines the library networks of a few of the Soviet Socialist Republics.

Some of the republic libraries date back to the nineteenth century. For example, the republic library of the Georgian SSR dates back to 1846, that of the Ukrainian SSR to 1866, and that of the Uzbekistan SSR to 1870. Following the establishment of the Soviet regime a few central libraries were founded, to wit: Azerbaijan in 1923, Latvia in the same year, and Tadzhik in 1929.

The reader is referred to Appendix B for a listing of the National Libraries of the U.S.S.R.

The early work of the national libraries was closely associated with the elimination of illiteracy, one of the principal goals set down by the SNK. M. I. Kalinin headed the all-Union Society 'Down with Illiteracy!' which became the institution charged with the task.

> The society's activity made it easier for the libraries to play a practical part in the

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> eradication of total illiteracy among the rural population and facilitated the organization of various forms of library service to suit the conditions and way of life of the different peoples. 31

The improvement in library services for the multinational population gave rise to a need to train representatives of the various groups in library work. As early as 1920 courses were organized in Azerbaijan for that purpose. In the years of 1923-24, similar courses were offered in the Ukraine, Byelorussia, Tatar, Bashkir and the Karelian ASSR. Still a little later course offerings were expanded to Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kirghizia.

With the rise in both literacy and library service, library usage increased dramatically, specially in the outlying republics. It is estimated that between 1923 and 1930 more than 30 million people passed through the literacy schools, [32] and by 1934 the total number of libraries in the country exceeded 116,000.

In the year 1972, books and newspapers were being published in "... 89 languages of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. In the Union and Autonomous Republics 233 publishing houses brought out more than 75,000 titles of books and paperbacks ... with a total of 1,300 million copies." [33]

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31. Nazmutdinov, I. K. "Libraries of the U.S.S.R.'s One Hundred Nationalities." Unesco Bulletin for Libraries, November-December, 1972, p. 309.

32. Nazmutdinov, op. cit., p. 310.

33. Nazmutdinov, op. cit., p. 312.

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The Byelorussian SSR had no State-financed libraries prior to the October Revolution. During W. W. II all the libraries in the Republic were wiped out. The V. I. Lenin State Library is the largest library in Byelorussia. It has a stock of over four million volumes and it expands at a rate of one-quarter of a million volumes per year. Approximately 23,000,000 copies of books are issued in Byelorussia each year, and magazines and newspapers in that language exceed two-hundred.

The Uzbek State Public Library is named after the poet, educator and statesman Alisher Navoi, it is located in Tashkent and as of 1967 it had stocks exceeding three and one-quarter million volumes. "The first public library in Central Asia was opened in Tashkent in 1870." [34] One of the oldest books in the library is the Ninth German Bible, printed in Nuremberg in 1483.

In the Ukrainian SSR, the ratio of libraries to inhabitants was one to 25,000 before the October Revolution. In 1971 the ratio stood at one per 600, indicating a dramatic rise in the availability of reading materials in that Republic.

The Central Asian republics of the U.S.S.R. cover a territory in excess of 4 million square kilometers. Probably, of all the nations annexed by the Russians, these represented the most backward and least cohesive elements. However, as a result of systematic development, the libraries of the Central Asian republics today boast massive holdings.

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34. Minkovic, M. "Library Developme[illegible]n Byelorussia and Uzbekistan." Unesco Bulletin for Libraries, M[illegible]pril, 1968, p. 98.

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The Exemplary Manual for State Libraries of the Union Republics, published in 1967, delimited the following functions for the libraries of the Soviet republics:

1. As state book stores of importance to the whole republic;

2. As the largest public library in each Union republic;

3. As the leading bibliographical institution of the republic, and

4. As the scientific methods centre for the library network of every Union republic. [35]

Professor O. S. Chubary'yan, writing about state libraries in the Soviet republics, states:

> Republic libraries now comprise the most complete library stock within each republic, reflecting the development of science, technology and culture in the whole Soviet Union and ensuring that a wide variety of enquiries from all sections of the population can be satisfied. 36

CONCLUSION

Although we have attempted to provide as comprehensive an analysis as possible, it became clear very early in the study that the task of compiling a survey of U.S.S.R. libraries within the scope of a research paper was well nigh impossible. However, as we began our research it became clear that Soviet librarianship - at least for the neophyte -

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35. Francis, Simon, ed. Libraries in the USSR. Hamden: Linnet Books, 1971, p. 16.

36. Francis, op. cit., p. 20.

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merits an eclectic rather than a specialized approach. It is our hope that this paper will add to the body of knowledge about the U.S.S.R. and that it may stimulate further research in a field relatively unexplored by American scholars.

June 1974

PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN THE UNION REPUBLICS

1913 and 1970

Union Republic	Number of Libraries 1913	Number of Libraries 1970	Stock (in thousands) 1913	Stock (in thousands) 1970
Armenia	13	1,259	9	10,843
Azerbaijan	25	2,922	18	22,952
Byelorussia	851	7,222	423	55,428
Estonia	117	867	50	9,450
Georgia	25	3,540	18	22,250
Kazakhstan	139	7,415	98	64,734
Kirghizia	-	1,327	-	11,398
Latvia	112	1,519	126	16,038
Lithuania	27	2,407	31	18,784
Moldavia	72	1,889	54	17,103
R.S.F.S.R.	9,342	60,140	6,698	729,593
Tadzhikistan	-	1,140	-	7,442
Turkmenistan	-	1,102	-	6,374
Ukrainian SSR	3,153	27,400	1,917	282,187
Uzbekistan	-	5,712	-	31,111
Total	13,876	125,861	9,442	1,305,687

Sources: 1913 - Francis, ed. Libraries in the USSR, p. 108.
1970 - Nazmutdinov, Libraries of the U.S.S.R.'s One Hundred Nationalities, p. 311.

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NATIONAL LIBRARIES OF THE USSR

M. F. Mjasniejan State Republic Library of the Armenian SSR, Erevan

M. F. Ahundov Public Library of the Azerbaijan Republic, Baku

V. I. Lenin State Library of the Byelorussian SSR, Minsk

F. R. Krejcval'da State Library of the Estonian SSR, Tallin

Karl Marx State Public Library of the Georgian SSR, Tbilisi

A. S. Pushkin State Public Library of the Kazakh SSR, Alma-Ata

N. G. Chernishevsky State Public Library of the Kirghiz SSR, Frunze

State Library of the Latvian SSR, Riga

State Republican Library of the Lithuanian SSR, Vilnius (formerly at Kaunas)

N. K. Krupskaya State Republican Library of the Moldavian SSR, Kisinev

Lenin State Library of the USSR, Moscow

M. E. Staltykov-Shchedrin State Public Library, Leningrad

Firdousi State Republican Library of the Tadzhik SSR, Stalinabad

Karl Marx State Library of Turkmen, Ashabad

Soviet Union Communist Party State Republican Library of the Ukrainian SSR, Kiev

Alisher Navoi State Public Library of the Uzbek SSR, Taskent

State Public Library of the Karelian ASSR, Petrozavodsk

Source: List of the Principal Libraries in the USSR
Unesco Bulletin for Libraries, March-April 1960

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LENIN'S QUESTIONS ABOUT LIBRARY OPERATIONS

Can you give exact figures to show:

1. The growth in book turnover in your library ?
2. The use made of your reading room ?
3. The exchange of books and newspaers with other libraries and reading rooms ?
4. The compilation of a central catalogue ?
5. The use of the library on Sundays ?
6. The use of the library in the evenings ?
7. The enrolment of new categories of readers, women, children, non-Russians, etc. ?
8. The reference service to readers ?
9. Simple and practical methods of storing books and newspapers and conserving them ?
10. Mechanical methods of getting the book to the reader and returning it to the shelves ?
11. Loans for home reading ?
12. The simplification of the system of guarantees for home loans ?
13. The simplification of the system for sending books through the post ?

Source : S. Simsova, ed. Lenin, Krupskaia and Libraries, p. 21.

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